United Nations A/55/707–S/2000/1223

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
21 December 2000
English
Original: Arabic

General Assembly
Fifty-fifth session
Agenda item 40
The situation in the Middle East

Security Council
Fifty-fifth year

Letter dated 20 December 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, and further to my earlier letters, I have the honour to inform you below of the series of violations of Lebanese sovereignty perpetrated by Israel by land, air and sea during the period from 1 to 11 December 2000.

1 December 2000

At 0200 hours Israeli forces at their position on Tallat Sammaqah fired a number of 120-mm mortar shells and directed several bursts of medium-weapons fire at Mazra'at Bastarah and the outlying areas of their aforementioned position. Between 0710 and 0730 hours four explosions were heard inside the occupied Shab'a farmlands.

At 1000 hours a landmine left by the Israeli aggression in the area between the villages of Hunin and Markaba exploded, severing the left leg of 19-year-old Abbas Aly Faqih, who was herding livestock.

At 1130 hours, while a group of journalists was approaching Bawwabat Hassan, an outlying area of Kafr Shuba, Israeli forces at their position on Tallat Sammaqah inside the occupied Shab'a farmlands directed several bursts of light-weapons fire at the group. No one was hurt.

Between 1615 and 1625 hours Israeli forces at their positions inside the occupied Shab'a farmlands fired four 120-mm mortar shells and directed a number of bursts of fire towards the areas surrounding their position on Tallat Sammaqah.

2 December 2000

At 1130 hours three persons were wounded by an exploding landmine in Dibbin, Marj Uyun province, at a position that had been previously occupied by elements of the Lahad militia. At 0830 hours a further landmine, left by the Israeli

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aggression, wounded Usam Muslimany at the Tall Bra'shit encampment, a former position of the Israeli enemy forces.

Between 1810 and 1830 hours Israeli helicopters overflew the Shab'a farmlands before leaving in the direction of the occupied territories.

3 December 2000

At 0630 hours Israeli forces at their position on Ruwasit Sammaqah inside the occupied Shab'a farmlands directed several bursts of medium-weapons fire at the outlying areas of their aforementioned position.

Between 0710 and 0925 hours an Israeli reconnaissance aircraft overflew the Shab'a farmlands at very high altitude.

At 1215 hours one of the soldiers at the Abbad position directed bursts of fire from a light assault weapon into the air towards several citizens on the Lebanese border.

At 1330 hours a herd of livestock belonging to Aly Safa triggered a landmine left by the Israeli aggression on the outskirts of Arnun. Five goats were killed, but no one was injured.

At 1315 hours the Israeli enemy forces at the Abbad position directed bursts of fire into the air over the heads of some 20 persons who had gathered on the Lebanese border.

At 1615 hours Israeli forces at their position on Ruwasit Sammaqah inside the occupied Shab'a farmlands directed several bursts of medium-weapons fire at the outlying areas of their aforementioned position.

Between 1755 and 2000 hours Israeli helicopters were heard overflying the Shab'a farmlands.

Between 1955 and 2025 hours, within the Israeli territorial waters off the coast of Ra's Naqurah, an Israeli military launch fired six light flares and directed several bursts of medium-weapons fire over the sea within the aforementioned waters.

4 December 2000

At 0530 hours Israeli forces at their position at Sammaqah inside the occupied Shab'a farmlands directed several bursts of medium-weapons fire at the outlying areas of their aforementioned position.

At 1300 hours a number of Israeli labourers breached the barbed-wire fence at Sahl Khiyam on the international border opposite the settlement of Matallah, going one metre inside Lebanese territory in order to work on a soakaway under the fence, using a cement-mixer. The operation was carried out under the guard of an Israeli patrol. They all left at 1400 hours.

At 1300 hours Israeli military aircraft carried out mock attacks over Jabal al-Rayhan. At 1310 hours these aircraft overflew the Jba' region at low altitudes. They withdrew at 1730 hours.

At 1310 hours Israeli military aircraft overflew the Marj Uyun region at high altitudes.

At 1650 hours Israeli forces raked the outlying areas of their position at Ruwaysat al-Ilm in the occupied Shab'a farmlands with medium-weapons fire.

At 2120 hours enemy aircraft overflew the Bint Jubayl region at high altitudes.

Between 2230 and 2240 hours Israeli military aircraft overflew the sea opposite the coast at Tyre at very high altitudes.

At 2310 hours an Israeli military launch at sea opposite Ra's al-Naqurah outside Lebanese territorial waters fired four light flares over the sea.

5 December 2000

At intervals between 1035 and 1235 hours Israeli military aircraft overflew the regions of Nabatiyah, Marj 'Uyun, Hasbayya and Iqlim al-Tuffah at very high altitudes.

At 1650 hours Israeli forces located opposite the area on the Lebanese border outside the village of Ayta al-Sha'b directed bursts of light-weapons fire at Habib Kamil Surur, who was hunting birds, and hit him in the right leg.

6 December 2000

Between 0430 and 0440 hours Israeli forces raked the outlying areas of their position at Tallat Sammaqah in the occupied Shab'a farmlands with medium-weapons fire.

At 0900 hours, on the borders of Lebanon and occupied Palestine, close to the village of Ramiyah-Marwahin, an Israeli military force of some 70 elements supported by a tank and three Hammer-type vehicles was deployed.

At intervals between 1005 and 1140 hours Israeli military aircraft overflew the southern region at very high altitudes. An Israeli reconnaissance aircraft also overflew the Hasbayya area at the same altitude.

Between 1400 and 1430 hours Israeli forces raked the boundaries of the occupied Shab'a farmlands opposite the Majdiyyah area with medium-weapons fire. An Israeli helicopter also overflew the farmlands.

At 1500 hours the Israeli forces began to dig a trench for the storage of rainwater at Thaghry in Udaysah, Marj Uyun province, alongside the occupied Palestine side of the border strip. The trench was 70 centimetres deep, 50 centimetres wide and 600 metres long.

Between 1630 and 1640 hours Israeli forces raked the outlying areas of their position at Ruwaysat al-Ilm in the occupied Shab'a farmlands with medium-weapons fire.

At 1815 hours bursts of heavy- and light-weapons fire were heard to the south of Tallat Sardanah and Naqqar in the occupied Shab'a farmlands. At 1900 hours artillery shells and bursts of fire directed towards the outlying areas of liberated Kafr Shuba were heard originating from occupied Ruwaysat al-Sammaqah and Ruwaysat al-Ilm. The bombardment and firing stopped at 1915 hours.

7 December 2000

On the night of 6 December 2000 the Israeli forces dug a trench 1,600 metres long along the barbed-wire fence in the Udaysah area.

Between 0940 and 1030 hours an Israeli reconnaissance aircraft overflew the Tyre region at very high altitude.

At 1015 hours a number of bursts of gunfire were heard on the Lebanese-Israeli border close to Rumaysh.

Between 1345 and 1430 hours an Israeli reconnaissance aircraft overflew the Sidon and Jazzin regions at very high altitude.

Between 1945 and 2010 hours Israeli patrols were heard overflying the occupied Shab'a farmlands.

9 December 2000

Between 1300 and 1315 hours Israeli forces directed several bursts of medium-weapons fire at the outlying areas of their position at Tallat Ramta in the occupied Shab'a farmlands.

Between 1400 and 1430 hours Israeli forces at their positions at Tallat Ruwaysat al-Ilm and Sammaqah inside the occupied Shab'a farmlands fired several 120-mm mortar shells and directed a number of bursts of medium-weapons fire towards the areas surrounding the two aforementioned positions.

11 December 2000

Between 1135 and 1145 hours Israeli military aircraft overflew the Lebanese territorial waters opposite Tyre at very high altitudes.

At 1400 hours at Mazra'at Bastara inside the occupied Shab'a farmlands an Israeli patrol directed a number of bursts of medium-weapons fire at a herd of goats belonging to Muhammad Abdullah Zuhrah. Mr. Zuhrah was wounded by gravel in his right leg and several of his goats were killed.

At 1500 hours the enemy Israeli forces raked the outlying areas of their position at Mazra'at Fashkul inside the occupied Shab'a farmlands with medium-weapons fire.

Like previous attacks, this new series of Israeli violations constitutes a flagrant breach of Security Council resolution 425 (1978) and a violation of Lebanese sovereignty, and threatens stability in the region.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly under agenda item 40, and of the Security Council

(*Signed*) Selim **Tadmoury**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative